1736. (Transferred to the 6th December, 1988)

Import duty on Newsprint

1737. SHRI YALLA SESI BHUSHANA RAO: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is a proposal to increase import duty on newsprint to 40 per cent;

(b) what is the growth of circulation of newspaper per 1000 inhabitants in the country;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the growth of circulation of newspapers is the lowest in the country as compared to other countries of the world;

(d) whether it is also a fact that the disproportionate high cost of newsprint and its low quality along with other restrictions has stunted the growth of circulation of newspapers; and

(e) the steps Government propose to take to reach the growth norms recommended by the UNESCO, for developing countries in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI H. K. L. BHAGAT): (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (e) As per the information contained in the Report of the Second Press Commission, the number of dailies and weeklies increased by 250 per cent and 300 per cent respectively in three decades from 1952. Similarly, circulation of dailies and weeklies went up by 423.9 per cent and 327.94 per cent respectively during this period. It is also stated that India has the second largest number of daily newspapers in Asia and the fourth largest in the world. But the circulation of newspapers relative to population is not high. The diffusion rate for 1000 population in 1975 was 15.4 copies and 19.7 copies in 1979. Low literacy, low income, lack of communication facilities etc. are generally regarded as the main reasons for low per capita availability of newspapers. Government have been taking various measures for the sustained and balanced growth of newspapers consistent with the policy of non-interference with the internal functioning and freedom of the press.

Expert Committee regarding small and medium newspapers

1738. SHRI YALLA SESI BHUSHANA RAO: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether any time limit has been fixed for the 17 member expert Committee constituted to look into the problems being faced by small and medium newspapers to submit its report; and

(b) if so, by when the Committee is likely to submit its report?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI H. K. L. BHAGAT): (a) and (b) The first meeting of the Expert Committee on Small and Medium Newspapers was held on 21-11-88. The Committee is expected to give its Report within three months.

Refusal for registration by Employment Exchange

1739. PROF. C. LAKSHMANNA: Will the Minister o LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Employment Exchange in some States have refused to register the names of the diploma holders of the Institute of Public Health and Hygiene, New Delhi, whose Diplomas are recognised approved/recommended by Governments of several States;

(b) whether the attention of Government has been drawn by the said Institute to the provisions of the Article 14, 16 and 19 of the Constitution of India and whether it has been claimed by the Institute that their Diploma holders are eligible for employment in Government and private sector and are eligible for registration in the Employment Exchanges on the basis of

the recognition of the Diploma by one State Government; and

(c) if reply to (a) and (b) be in the affirmative, what is the policy of the Government of India and State Governments with regard to eligibility for registration and employment in the light of Articles 14, 16 and 19 of the Constitution?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI BINDESHWARI DUBEY): (a) The Institute has brought this to the notice of the Government.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) All citizens of India resident in the country are eligible for registration at the Employment Exchanges at the place where they normally reside according to their qualification and experience for employment assistance. The qualifications as are recognised either by the Central Government or by respective State Governments are considered by Employment Exchanges for registration and employment assistance.

Newsitem "Press Karmcharion Ki Sunwai Nahi"

1740. SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether he has seen the reports 'Sahakari Sangh Ka Press Men Andher' (Jansatta dated 15th October, 1988) and 'Press Karamcharion Ki Sunwai Nahi' (Nav Bharat Times dt. 11th February, 1988) stating the various sufferings of the Press workers of the National Cooperative Union of India, at Hauz Khas, New Delhi and if so, what are the facts; and

(b) Government's response to each one of them?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COOPERATION IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHYAM LAL YADAV): (a) and (b) The inormation is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the Sabha.

Accommodation to the Chief Executive, NCUI

1741. SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the report published in the Times of India dated the 8th February, 1988 stating that the Chief Executives, NCUI had acquired accommodation in Vasant Bihar @ Rs. 5000 per month and renovation of the Chairman's office has been undertaken at a huge cost whereas Printing Press employees are deprived of their legitimate rights and financial benefits; and

(b) if so, the action taken against the guilty officers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COOPERATION IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHYAM LAL YADAV): (a) and (b) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the Sabha.

Closure of Modern Rice Mill, Durgapur

1742. SHRI SUNIL BASU RAY :
SHRI RAMNARAYAN GOSWAMI:
SHRI SAMAR MUKHERJEE :

Will the Minister of FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have decided to close down the modern Rice Mills under the FCI at Durgapur; if so, the reasons therefor and the number of workers likely to be affected due to the closure;

(b) whether Government have received any representation from the United Contractors Union, Durgapur regarding the absorption of casual workers;

(c) if so, whether Government propose to provide alternative jobs to the contractor workers working in the said mill; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor ?